

Prune (Dried Plum) Situation in Selected Countries

Total prune production is estimated to reach 260,581 tons in 2000/01, up 24 percent from the previous year. The United States, the largest prune producer in the world, is estimating a large prune crop of 199,581 tons for 2000/01, while France and Chile are expecting prune production to rise to more normal levels. Total prune exports, however, are estimated to rise by only 3 percent in 2000/01, mostly as a result of flat international demand for prunes.

United States

Prune production for 2000/01 (August 2000 to July 2001) is estimated at 199,581 tons, the second largest on record and up 23 percent from the previous year. Initial forecasts by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in June 2000 called for a smaller prune crop of 181,436 tons, but favorable weather has resulted in yields of 2.2 tons per acre compared to 1.9 tons per acre the previous year. While a large U.S. prune crop is estimated for 2000/01, high labor and energy costs may prompt California growers to leave smaller prunes in the fields, especially given the high cost of electricity needed to dry the prunes and the low price growers receive for them. Prune exports are estimated to reach 66,500 tons, up only 2 percent from the previous year. Exports may be higher if demand for prunes increases in overseas markets and if U.S. grower prices for prunes decline from last year's high price of \$809 per ton.

In 1999/2000, U.S. prune production reached 161,479 tons, most of which was in manufacturing sizes and could not be exported as consumer packs. Consequently, exports declined by 9 percent in 1999/2000. Exports to Japan, the largest consumer of U.S. prunes, declined by 19 percent in 1999/2000 to 16,046 tons. Other major markets include Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada and Hong Kong. U.S. prune exports to Hong Kong increased by 216 percent to reach 2,328 tons. It is estimated that 70 percent of prune exports to Hong Kong are transported to mainland China. Prune imports for 2000/01 are expected to remain unchanged from 1999/2000.

France

Prune production in 2000/01 (September 2000 to August 2001) is estimated up 41 percent to 41,000 tons, from the abnormally small 1999/2000 crop. Although production is expected to increase significantly in 2000/01, it is still likely to be below the 52,000-55,000 ton potential. France is the world's second largest prune producer after the United States.

French prune exports in 2000/01 are expected to reach 18,000 tons, up 18 percent from last year, as a result of the larger crop. The small 1999/2000 prune crop led to a 27-percent decline in prune exports last year to 15,255 tons. Despite the decline in exports last year, prune stocks declined from 23,200 tons in August 1999 to 12,000 tons in August 2000.

Chile

Prune production in 2000/01 (January 2000 to December 2000) is estimated at 20,000 tons, up 5 percent from the previous year. Industry sources have indicated that good economic results obtained by most producers during the last few years have encouraged many farmers to plant additional orchards or replace older, low producing trees.

Chile's prune exports are estimated to reach 19,000 tons in 2000/01, down 5 percent from the previous year. Chile's prunes are ready for shipment from the end of April through November. Major markets for Chile's prunes in 1999/2000 included Mexico, Brazil, Spain, Germany and Peru.

(The FAS Attache Report search engine contains reports on the Dried Fruit industries for 8 countries, including South Africa, Turkey and Australia. For information on production and trade, contact Karina Ramos at 202-720-6877. For information on marketing contact Kelly Strzelecki at 202-690-1341)

Prunes: Production, Supply and Distribution
Marketing Years 1997/98 - 2000/01

| Country/Marketing Year 1/ | Beginning Stocks | Production | Imports | Exports | Domestic Consumption | Ending Stocks |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------|---------|---------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Metric Tons | | | | | | |
| Chile | | | | | | |
| 1997/98 | 5,774 | 17,800 | 0 | 18,840 | 1,170 | 3,564 |
| 1998/99 | 3,564 | 21,500 | 0 | 21,340 | 1,170 | 2,554 |
| 1999/2000 | 2,554 | 19,000 | 0 | 20,000 | 1,170 | 384 |
| 2000/01 | 384 | 20,000 | 0 | 19,000 | 1,170 | 214 |
| France | | | | | | |
| 1997/98 | 43,180 | 28,500 | 351 | 22,754 | 25,137 | 24,140 |
| 1998/99 | 24,140 | 44,790 | 300 | 20,987 | 25,043 | 23,200 |
| 1999/2000 | 23,200 | 29,000 | 1,954 | 15,255 | 26,899 | 12,000 |
| 2000/01 | 12,000 | 41,000 | 1,000 | 18,000 | 25,000 | 11,000 |
| United States | | | | | | |
| 1997/98 | 97,527 | 194,138 | 200 | 70,150 | 101,233 | 120,482 |
| 1998/99 | 120,482 | 97,976 | 638 | 71,193 | 90,803 | 57,100 |
| 1999/2000 | 57,100 | 161,479 | 469 | 65,074 | 91,933 | 62,041 |
| 2000/01 | 62,041 | 199,581 | 420 | 66,500 | 101,542 | 94,000 |
| Total | | | | | | |
| 1997/98 | 146,481 | 240,438 | 551 | 111,744 | 127,540 | 148,186 |
| 1998/99 | 148,186 | 164,266 | 938 | 113,520 | 117,016 | 82,854 |
| 1999/2000 | 82,854 | 209,479 | 2,423 | 100,329 | 120,002 | 74,425 |
| 2000/01 | 74,425 | 260,581 | 1,420 | 103,500 | 127,712 | 105,214 |

1/ Marketing Years begin August in the United States, September in France and January in Chile
Sources: U.S. Agricultural Attache Reports, USDA/NASS estimates, Industry data and
U.S. Bureau of the Census.

U.S. Prune Exports
Marketing Years 1996/97 - 2000/01

| Country | 1996/97 | 1997/98 | 1998/99 | 1999/2000 | Aug. - Nov 1999/2000 | Aug. - Nov 2000/01 |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| | Metric Tons | | | | | |
| North America | | | | | | |
| Canada | 4,246 | 4,175 | 4,369 | 4,754 | 1,519 | 1,449 |
| Mexico | 1,091 | 1,276 | 794 | 993 | 444 | 491 |
| Sub-total | 5,337 | 5,451 | 5,163 | 5,747 | 1,963 | 1,940 |
| European Union | | | | | | |
| Germany | 10,237 | 11,139 | 9,878 | 9,601 | 2,762 | 5,149 |
| Italy | 5,676 | 6,489 | 5,592 | 5,770 | 1,806 | 2,221 |
| United Kingdom | 5,473 | 4,794 | 6,957 | 5,563 | 1,320 | 2,018 |
| Netherlands | 1,959 | 1,451 | 4,097 | 1,713 | 862 | 665 |
| Denmark | 1,614 | 1,613 | 1,499 | 1,657 | 945 | 1,001 |
| Belgium-Luxembourg | 286 | 205 | 399 | 1,478 | 21 | 1,688 |
| Finland | 1,768 | 1,739 | 1,393 | 1,167 | 840 | 1,184 |
| Sweden | 1,812 | 1,784 | 1,467 | 1,111 | 512 | 460 |
| Other | 1,839 | 1,817 | 1,414 | 1,279 | 587 | 1,503 |
| Sub-total | 30,664 | 31,031 | 32,696 | 29,339 | 9,655 | 15,889 |
| Asia | | | | | | |
| Japan | 14,980 | 20,162 | 19,705 | 16,046 | 5,187 | 4,355 |
| Hong Kong | 1,154 | 754 | 736 | 2,328 | 734 | 1,275 |
| Singapore | 3,292 | 1,949 | 1,514 | 1,379 | 526 | 487 |
| Taiwan | 891 | 876 | 1,701 | 1,040 | 319 | 139 |
| Other | 455 | 194 | 903 | 955 | 442 | 405 |
| Sub-total | 20,772 | 23,935 | 24,559 | 21,748 | 7,208 | 6,661 |
| Other Countries | | | | | | |
| Australia | 821 | 730 | 957 | 1,320 | 354 | 440 |
| Poland | 951 | 1,057 | 1,337 | 1,206 | 575 | 186 |
| New Zealand | 716 | 631 | 945 | 980 | 273 | 341 |
| Norway | 1103 | 1006 | 1103 | 953 | 521 | 550 |
| Israel | 1082 | 1132 | 1261 | 893 | 53 | 267 |
| Other | 5,602 | 5,180 | 3,170 | 2,886 | 1,102 | 1,437 |
| Sub-total | 10,275 | 9,736 | 8,773 | 8,238 | 2,878 | 3,221 |
| Grand Total | 67,051 | 70,150 | 71,193 | 65,074 | 21,708 | 27,706 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

U.S. Prune Imports
Marketing Years 1996/97 - 2000/01

| Country | 1996/97 | 1997/98 | 1998/99 | 1999/2000 | Aug. - Nov | Aug. - Nov |
|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | | | | | 1999/2000 | 2000/01 |
| | | | | | Metric Tons | |
| Argentina | 0 | 15 | 402 | 182 | 74 | 120 |
| Taiwan | 137 | 76 | 84 | 121 | 35 | 45 |
| China | 103 | 43 | 65 | 86 | 37 | 20 |
| Mexico | 0 | 0 | 20 | 37 | 18 | 1 |
| France | 34 | 2 | 3 | 22 | 22 | 0 |
| Turkey | 63 | 5 | 7 | 19 | 6 | 9 |
| Other | 127 | 60 | 58 | 3 | 0 | 6 |
| Grand Total | 464 | 200 | 638 | 469 | 192 | 200 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census